

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached two sheets of drawings include changes to figures 6 and 8. The first sheet, which includes figures 5 and 6, replaces the original sheet including figures 5 and 6. In figure 6, the representation of elements 102 and 105 have been corrected. The second sheet, which includes figure 8, replaces the original sheet including figure 8. In figure 8, the representation of element 108 has been corrected.

Attachments: Two Annotated Drawing Sheets
Two Replacement Drawing Sheets

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicant's Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, and for the acknowledgment of Applicant's Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449.

Applicant also acknowledges the Examiner's objections to the drawings and notes that the Examiner has not indicated that the drawings have been approved by the Official Draftsperson on a Form PTO-948. Applicant is submitting herewith two annotated sheets of drawings marked up to show the changes in red ink and two Replacement Sheets of Drawings, including the required corrections. The Examiner is thus requested to indicate that Applicant's drawings are acceptable in the next Official Action.

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1-6 will have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-6 are currently pending. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections and allowance of claims 1-6 in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings as failing to properly show Applicant's invention in operation. In response thereto, Applicant has submitted herewith two replacement sheets of drawings including the required corrections. For the Examiner's convenience, Applicant has also submitted herewith two annotated drawing sheets showing the changes in red ink. Accordingly, in view of the above noted

amendments and remarks, it is believed that the objections to the drawings have been overcome, and Applicant thus respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner has pointed out claim 1, lines 3-4; claim 1, line 3; claim 1, line 13; claim 2, line 4; claims 3-6; and claims 5 and 6 as being unclear. In response thereto, Applicant has amended claims 1-6, as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, in view of the above noted amendments and remarks, it is believed that the rejections of claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph have been overcome.

Additionally, the Examiner has pointed out claims 4 and 6 as being unclear as claiming elements of the shock absorber in duplicate. However, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4 and 6 are clear and do not claim elements of the shock absorber in duplicate. In this regard, Applicant notes that claim 1 recites "a shock absorber that allows the slide bracket and the connecting shaft to perform a sliding movement with respect to each other when a vehicular collision occurs and absorbing a shock during the sliding movement". Thus, as claimed in claim 1, the shock absorber is broadly claimed as an element of the shock absorbing steering column. Thus, the shock absorber may itself comprise an element or a plurality elements, including elements which provide friction. Further, as pointed out by the Examiner, claim 2 sets forth a bush; and claims 4 and 6 (which both depend from claim 2) set forth a strap. Thus, claims 2, 4, and 6 set forth, with increasing particularity, elements of the shock

absorber. In other words, the shock absorber as claimed in claim 1 may include, inter alia, a bush and a strap. Thus, claim 1 is a broader recitation of the shock absorber; and claims 4 and 6 are narrower recitations of the shock absorber. Claims 4 and 6 do not recite elements which are necessarily in addition to the element(s) of claim 1; claims 4 and 6 merely recite the shock absorber in a narrower fashion than does claim 1. Therefore, it is believed that claims 4 and 6 are clear and not duplicative. Thus, in view of the above noted remarks, it is believed that the rejection of claims 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being unclear and as claiming elements in duplicate is improper.

Accordingly, in view of the above noted amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YABUSUTKA et al. (GB 2 365 826) in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. (JP 2000-062623).

However, Applicant notes that YABUSUTKA et al. and HATSUSHIMA et al. fail to teach or suggest the subject matter claimed in claim 1. In particular, claim 1 sets forth a shock absorbing steering column including, inter alia, "a lower mounting bracket fixed to the body; a rotational bracket rotatably connected to the lower mounting bracket"; a slide bracket; a connecting shaft passing through the long hole of the slide bracket; and a shock absorber".

The YABUSUTKA et al. reference discloses a collapsible tilting steering column which includes a pivoting supporting bracket B. The pivoting supporting bracket B includes connecting members 6, and a connecting plate member 7, which attaches the pivoting supporting bracket B to locations on a vehicle body. As recognized and stated by the Examiner, the YABUSUTKA et al. reference does not disclose that the pivoting supporting bracket B is connected to a lower mounting bracket fixed to the vehicle body. Therefore, the YABUSUTKA et al. device does not include "a lower mounting bracket fixed to the body" and "a rotational bracket rotatably connected to the lower mounting bracket", as set forth in claim 1.

The HATSUSHIMA et al. reference discloses a support structure for a steering column. The HATSUSHIMA et al. steering column support structure includes a second support means 24 which connects to a bracket 28. As shown in figure 3, the second support means 24 includes a slot 54 through which a member 50 passes; and the second support means 24 appears to be rigidly connected to the bracket 28. Accordingly, the second support means 24 is not rotatably connected to the bracket 28. Therefore, HATSUSHIMA et al. fails to teach or suggest "a lower mounting bracket fixed to the body" and "a rotational bracket rotatably connected to the lower mounting bracket", as set forth in claim 1. Therefore, HATSUSHIMA et al. teaches a second bracket which is rigidly, not rotatably, connected to a bracket. Accordingly, HATSUSHIMA et al. teaches a rigid connection, not a rotatable connection. Further, as described above, YABUSUTKA et al. discloses a pivoting supporting bracket, but does not teach the pivoting supporting bracket attached to a lower mounting bracket. Therefore, since even if the references were combined as suggested by the Examiner,

a pivoting supporting bracket rigidly connected to a lower mounting bracket could only result. The combination of references does not teach or suggest a rotatable connection between the pivoting supporting bracket and a lower mounting bracket. (It is noted that that the pivoting supporting bracket B of YABUSUTKA et al. is pivotable with respect to the structure A, and not with respect to the elements via which the pivoting supporting bracket B is attached to the vehicle body.) Thus, the references, taken as a whole, fail to teach or suggest a rotational bracket rotatably connected to a lower mounting bracket. Since YABUSUTKA et al. fails to teach or suggest a bracket rotationally connected to a member on the vehicle body and since HATSUSHIMA et al. fails to teach or suggest a bracket which is rotatably connected to a lower mounting bracket, the combination, as suggested by the Examiner also fails to teach or suggest a rotational bracket rotatably connected to a lower mounting bracket. Therefore, the HATSUSHIMA et al. document fails to cure the deficiencies of the YABUSUTKA et al. device, and even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of YABUSUTKA et al. and HATSHUSHIMA et al. have been properly combined, Applicant's claimed shock absorbing steering column including, inter alia, "a lower mounting bracket fixed to the body" and "a rotational bracket rotatably connected to the lower mounting bracket", as set forth in claim 1 would not have resulted from the combined teachings thereof.

Further, there is nothing in the cited prior art that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to make the modification suggested by the Examiner in the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. Thus, the only reason to combine the teachings of YABUSUTKA et al. and HATSUSHIMA et al. results from a review of Applicant's disclosure and the application of impermissible

hindsight. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. is improper for all the above reasons and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al., and further in view of MCCARTHY et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,575,497).

Applicant notes that YABUSUTKA et al. and HATSUSHIMA et al. fail to teach or suggest the subject matter claimed, including, inter alia, "a lower mounting bracket fixed to the body" and "a rotational bracket rotatably connected to the lower mounting bracket", as set forth in independent claim 1, as described above. Further, MCCARTHY fails to cure these deficiencies. Moreover, there is nothing in the cited prior art that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to make the modification suggested by the Examiner in the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and further in view of MCCARTHY. Thus, the only reason to combine the teachings of YABUSUTKA et al., HATSUSHIMA et al., and MCCARTHY results from a review of Applicant's disclosure and the application of impermissible hindsight. Even if the teachings of YABUSUTKA et al., HATSUSHIMA et al., and MCCARTHY were combined, as suggested by the Examiner, the claimed combination would not result. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over YABUSUTKA in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and further in view of MCCARTHY is improper for all the above reasons and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and further in view of REIFE (U.S. Patent No. 6,655,716); and has rejected claims 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and MCCARTHY et al., and further in view of REIFE.

Applicant notes that YABUSUTKA et al., HATSUSHIMA et al., and MCCARTHY et al. fail to teach or suggest the subject matter claimed, including, inter alia, "a lower mounting bracket fixed to the body" and "a rotational bracket rotatably connected to the lower mounting bracket", as set forth in independent claim 1, as described above. Further, REIFE fails to cure these deficiencies. Moreover, there is nothing in the cited prior art that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to make the modification suggested by the Examiner in the rejection of claims 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and further in view of REIFE; and in the rejection of claims 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and MCCARTHY et al., and further in view of REIFE.

Thus, the only reason to combine the teachings of YABUSUTKA et al., HATSUSHIMA et al., MCCARTHY et al. and REIFE results from a review of Applicant's disclosure and the application of impermissible hindsight. Even if the teachings of YABUSUTKA et al., HATSUSHIMA et al., MCCARTHY and REIFE were combined, as suggested by the Examiner, the claimed combination would not result. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and further in view of REIFE; and the rejection of claims 4 and 6

under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YABUSUTKA et al. in view of HATSUSHIMA et al. and MCCARTHY et al., and further in view of RIEFE are improper for all the above reasons and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all the rejections, and an early indication of the allowance of claims 1-6.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present amendment is proper and that none of the references of record, considered alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention as recited in claims 1-6. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

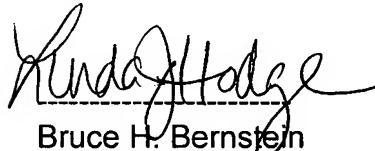
Accordingly, consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present amendment and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, which do not narrow the scope of the claims, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered cosmetic in nature, and to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
Byeong Hoon LEE

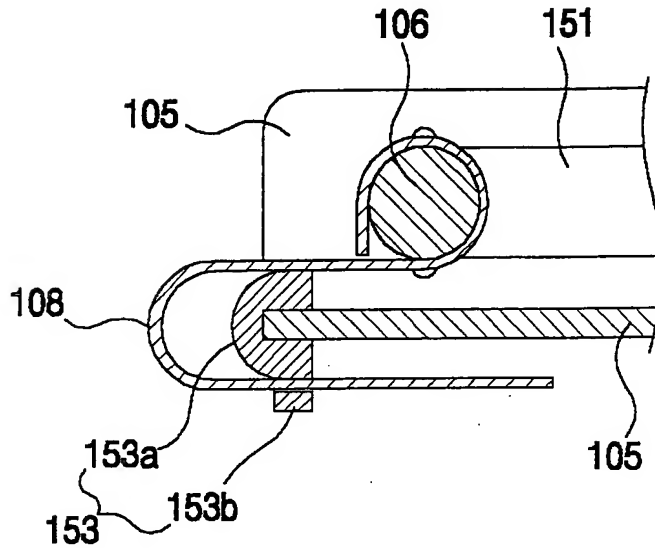

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[FIG. 5]



[FIG. 6]

